THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) and (b) An Act namely "The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act 1996" to provide for the extension of the provisions of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 to Scheduled Areas has been enacted on the basis of the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee which is being implemented by state Governments. The provisions of the amended Act 1996 for the Panchayats in Scheduled Areas state that a State Legislature shall ensure that Panchayats at the appropriate level and the Gram Sabhas are endowed specifically with the powers to exercise control over the institutional functionaries in all social sectors which include health care and education.

Tribal Welfare Hostels

1943. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD : will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether tribal welfare hostel inmates are made nearly to starve, as reported in the 'Newstime' dated 14th February, 2000; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to ensure that food supplied at tribal students' hostels are not of inferior quality and students' get rid of the treatment meted out to them by the warden and other authorities?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As reported by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, the complaint of the hostel inmates was that they were not being served food as per the prescribed menu. It has further been reported that to ensure quality, supplies are made to the hostels through Girijan Cooperative Corporation which also checks quality before actual supply to the hostels. On receipt of the complaint that students were not getting food as per the prescribed menu, the headmaster and warded have been removed from duty and disciplinary action has been initiated against them. To ensure that the prescribed menu is served in all the institutions, regular and surprise checks are made by Project Officers, Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA); District Tribal Welfare Officer and Assistance Social Welfare Officers.

Tribal population below poverty line in NER

1944. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: will the Minister of TRI BAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state: